

First Parish Congregational Church, UCC
47 East Derry Road, East Derry, New Hampshire 03041

April 14, 2019
Founder's Day Service
An Interfaith Ecumenical Service of Gratitude

"In my Father's house there are many dwelling places." Jn 14:2a



ALL ARE WELCOME

*"Friend, you enter this church not as a stranger, but as a guest of God.
Come, then, with joy in your heart and thanks upon your lips,
and offer God today your love and your service."*

(Adapted from a 12th Century Church in Hampshire, England)

***PROCESSION HYMN # 4** "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" (vs. 1 & 2)

WELCOME by Pastor Deborah

INTROIT Handchime Choir: "Meditation on Brother James' Air"
by James L. Bain, arr. Lloyd Larson

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (Please stand) **Rick Voutour, Holy Cross Church, 1998**

One: We come from east and west, north and south,
as one extended community.

**Many: We come with grateful hearts to worship the one God
who loves us all.**

One: We come with thanksgiving for God's leading in the past.

Many: We come with joyful expectation as we look to the future.

One: May we open our hearts to the God of all creation and all peoples

**Many: And open our hearts to one another as we minister
in the name of the One who was, and is and shall forever be.**

***INVOCATION** (unison)

**Gracious and merciful God, we have come from many congregations to
worship you together. We give thanks for the many ways you have led
people of this area to establish congregations for worship and service. We
are inspired by their faith and courage as they have created new ways of
service and obedience. Strengthen our trust in you and our love for one
another, that people of faith may continue to bring hope and healing to
people who need your light and your love. Amen.**

PSALM 133

Rabbi Peter Levy, Etz Hayim Synagogue, 1992

How very good and pleasant it is
when God's people live together in unity!
It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down upon the beard,
on the beard of Aaron,
running down over the collar of his robes.
It is like the dew of Hermon,
which falls on the mountains of Zion.
For there the Lord ordained his blessing,
life forevermore.

RESPONSIVE PRAYER (adapted from "Flames of the Spirit", Ruth C. Duck)

The Rev. Arthur Reublinger, Compassionate Care Hospice

One: Spirit of the Living God, as we gather in this place, allow your spirit to fill
our very being.

**Many: As we worship today, we remember our brothers and sisters who
worship elsewhere in our communities and throughout the world.
Inspire each of us to work more faithfully for justice and dignity of
life everywhere.**

One: Raise our vision above the barriers of color, culture, and creed that separate us. Give us wisdom as we deal with one another; help us to recognize and to respect different ways, rather than to judge.

Many: Teach us that your love has no boundaries, that all people are precious in your eyes.

One: Help us find new ways to work together, reaching out our hands with help and opening our hearts in love.

Many: Awaken in us the desire to seek your way of serving you in the world. Amen.

PSALM 136 (adapted)

Fr. Ray Bonin, Church of Transfiguration, 1907

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
for God's steadfast love endures forever.

O give thanks to the God of gods,

O give thanks to the Lord of lords,
who alone does great wonders,

for God's steadfast love endures forever.

who by understanding made the heavens,

who spread out the earth on the waters,

who made the great lights,

the sun to rule over the day,

the moon and stars to rule over the night

for God's steadfast love endures forever.

It is he who remembered us in our low estate,
and rescued us from our foes,

who gives food to all flesh,

O give thanks to the God of heaven,

for God's steadfast love endures forever.

A THANKSGIVING LITANY

Ms. Randee Martin, Reader, First Church of Christ, Scientist, 1905

God eternal and righteous One,

Who created the heavens and the Earth,

We gather today to give you thanks

For breath that fills us with your life,

For love that softens our hearts,

For beauty revealed at every turn.

O redeeming and forgiving One,

Who is always faithful and merciful

We gather to give you thanks

For your constant presence over 300 years,

For challenging us to faithfulness and to service,

For all the ways you have called us to be your people.

For the wonder of your indwelling Presence,

For the comfort of your compassion and lovingkindness,

For drawing us together as peoples of faith.

**With your help we are made whole,
Because of your love we are refreshed and renewed.
Through your abiding Presence we are one community.
We gather to give you thanks.**

PSALM 105:1-5

Fr. Philip Pacheco OFM, St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, 1888

O give thanks to the Lord, call on God's name,
make known God's deeds among the peoples.
Sing to God, sing praises to God;
tell of all God's wonderful works.
Glory in God's holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.
Seek the Lord and God's strength;
seek God's presence continually.
Remember the wonderful works God has done,
his miracles, and the judgments God has uttered,

SPECIAL MUSIC Trumpet Tune by G. F. Handel
Benjamin Allen, Malysa Deranian, trumpets

A NEW BEGINNING

The Rev. Diana Augspurger, ret., 1975-1988 First Parish Church

Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing...."
So Abram went, as the Lord had told him. (Genesis 12)

"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going." (Hebrews 11:8)

ISAIAH 43: 18-19

The Rev. Nory Leachon, Saint Luke's United Methodist Church, 1885

God said, "Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild animals will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches; for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise."

PSALM 46

The Rev. Malcolm Widness, The First Baptist Church of Derry, 1880

God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear,
though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble with its tumult...
The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge.

***HYMN #25:** O God, Our Help in Ages Past (vs. 1, 3, 4 & 5)

LITANY FOR GOD'S CHURCH

The Rev. Jim Howard, ret., 1989-1993 First Parish Church

One: For the worship of God in prayer and praise, for the preaching of God's Sacred Word, for the celebration of God's people,

Many: We give thanks for God's church.

One: For the comfort of those who mourn, for the help of those who are perplexed, for the guidance of those who seek strength,

Many: We give thanks for God's church.

One: For the support and nurture of families, for the guidance of children, for the calling of youth to a life of service,

Many: We give thanks for God's church.

One: For guarding against evil, for fostering faithfulness, for promoting peace and justice in all the earth,

Many: We give thanks for God's church.

One: For the opening of minds to your truth, for the care of the needy, for the giving of hope and courage,

Many: We give thanks for God's church.

One: For the consecration of life and service, in grateful remembrance of those who have come before us, and in gratitude for our life together in our various houses of worship and our communities,

Many: We give thanks to you, Holy Alpha and Omega, for this community's past, as we pray for your houses of worship that continue to bless and guide your beloved Children. Amen.

(adapted from UCC Book of Worship)

PSALM 78: 1-7

The Rev. Amy Alletzhauser, Londonderry United Methodist, 1854

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;
incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

I will open my mouth in a parable;

I will utter dark sayings from of old,
things that we have heard and known,
that our ancestors have told us.

We will not hide them from their children;
we will tell to the coming generation
the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might,
and the wonders that God has done.

The Lord established a decree in Jacob
and appointed a law in Israel,
which he commanded our ancestors
to teach to their children;

that the next generation might know them,
the children yet unborn
and rise up and tell them to their children,
so that they should set their hope in God,
and not forget the works of God,
but keep his commandments.

MATTHEW 5:13-16

The Rev. Susan Remick, 2009-2013 First Parish Church Interim

You are like salt for all people. But if salt loses its saltiness, there is no way to make it salty again. It has become worthless, so it is thrown out and people trample on it.

You are like light for the whole world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one lights a lamp and puts it under a bowl; instead he puts it on the lamp stand, where it gives light for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven.

UNISON PRAYER

The Rev. Betty French, 2013 First Parish Church Bridge Interim

Gracious God, the gratitude and joy of this day surrounds us. Many people have prepared for this time of celebration. Help us remember that it is not our own doing that brings us here, but only your grace and love. Your love has surrounded us from the beginning, even when we have not recognized it. Your love has been present in your word and in the words and acts of others. For this we give you thanks. Teach us to walk gently in your path of love, seeking justice, making peace, cherishing the earth and one another. Enliven our imaginations that we can see through present challenges to future newness. Embolden us with your love, that we may live now as if the new had already come. In joy we offer you our praise. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC: "Be Thou My Vision"

First Parish Church Choir

COLOSSIANS 3:12-17

The Rev. Dr. John Barner, Central Congregational Church, 1837

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.

Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

EXODUS 33

The Rev. Heidi Carrington Heath, Associate Pastor First Parish Church 2015-2016; Current Chaplain Philips Exeter Academy

On the eve of the departure of the Scots-Irish group from Ireland to North America in 1718, Rev. James MacGregor used the words of Moses from Exodus 33:12ff.

Moses said to the Lord, "If thy presence go not with me to the new land, carry us not up hence."

God said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."

PSALM 137:4-6

The Rev. Dr. John Seiders, Windham Presbyterian Church, 1742

The group of people with Rev. James MacGregor were not allowed to settle in Boston and spent the winter of 1718-1719 on a ship anchored off the coast of Maine. When they had survived that winter with no fatalities, they praised God and used Psalm 137. [Note: Rev. MacGregor was in Dracut at the time.]

How could we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?

If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither!

Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you, if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy.

ISAIAH 32:2

The Rev. Karla Dias, Londonderry Presbyterian Church, 1735

In April 1719 some of the Scots-Irish families decided to settle in an area called Nutfield for the many nut trees. They asked Rev. James MacGregor to join them. On the north shore of Beaver Lake he preached the first sermon in this area on April 12, 1719. He included Isaiah 32:2

"He will be like a hiding place from the wind,
a shelter from the tempest,
like streams of water in a dry place,
like the shade of a great rock in a weary land."

EZEKIEL 37:26

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof,

First Parish Congregational Church, UCC, 1719

Later in that spring of 1719, Rev. James MacGregor was officially called to be the pastor of this first church in the area. At his installation as pastor the service included Ezekiel 37:26

"I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will bless them and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary among them forevermore."

***HYMN #419:** Now Thank We All Our God (vs. 1 & 2)

CLOSING REMARKS AND BENEDICTION

The Rev. Gordon Rankin, Conference Minister of NH Conference, UCC

POSTLUDE (Please remain seated during the Postlude)

As the postlude concludes our clergy guests will recess from the Hall.

Everyone is invited to stay and enjoy a time of fellowship and light refreshments after the worship service.

Our hospitality committee may need your help to set up tables for a reception. Please lend a hand.

“In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places.” Jn 14:2a

Houses of Worship established in “Nutfield” with year of inception and current leadership.

1998 Holy Cross Church began as a mission church of St. Thomas and is currently located at 187 Hampstead Rd. Long before we built our church, we needed a place to hold mass and religious education classes. We rented space at East Derry Memorial School and First Parish generously offered use of its church to our parish for a very low fee to support our start and growth. We held Saturday afternoon masses and RE classes during the week at First Parish for many years. First Parish and its members have always been welcoming and gracious to our parish. We are indebted and deeply grateful for this kindness and generosity, and we are honored to participate in the celebration of the 300th Anniversary of Reverend MacGregor's first sermon in Nutfield. Our current priest is Fr. Roger Croteau.

1992 Etz Hayim Synagogue evolved out of a Torah study group taught during the winter of 1991-1992 by Rabbi Bruce Diamond. As interest a local Jewish religious group formed, Rabbi Diamond began to conduct Shabbat evening services at the West Side Community Center in Derry, the first being held in April 1992. By June of that year, a working group of twelve households interested in establishing a synagogue drafted by-laws and received a charter from the state of New Hampshire. In September 1992, Etz Hayim held its first High Holy Day services at Derry's Masonic Temple. Later, the founders utilized the Odd Fellows Hall on Oak Street in Derry. The synagogue continued to grow, and established a home and an enduring relationship with the Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration on Hood Road in Derry. Eventually, the Church of the Transfiguration offered to subdivide a portion of its lot for Etz Hayim to purchase and build a home of its own. Etz Hayim purchased the land in 2008. The new building was dedicated on March 29, 2009. The resulting interfaith campus consolidates the long-term relationship between the synagogue and the church. In 2013, the Eagle Tribune identified the relationship between Etz Hayim Synagogue and the Episcopal Church as one of the top 603 reasons to live in New Hampshire. Among their joint efforts, the two organizations host Elijah’s Table, a free monthly meals program. Etz Hayim serves congregants from many communities, including Derry, Londonderry, Chester, Epping, Hampstead, Hudson, Nottingham, Raymond, Salem, and Windham. The current rabbi is Rabbi Peter Levy.

1907 Church of the Transfiguration is an Episcopal Church that began as a mission in Derry in 1907, by Rev George Haslam, establishing a parish of the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire in 1907. Our original building is now the Odd Fellows Hall on Oak Street, and we acquired the property on 1 Hood Rd where we currently worship in 1961. Our current priest is Fr. Ray Bonin.

1905 First Church of Christ, Scientist had its beginnings in Derry in 1905 when Christian Scientists began holding informal services in downtown West Derry. By 1913 the members had formally organized as a church. The current church edifice, located at One Boyd Road, was built in 1940.

Early members included: Wallace P. and Harriet Mack of Mack's Apples, Marjorie Benson of Benson's Lumber and Hardware, and Isabella Jones and Minnie and Louis Ferdinando of J&F Farms. Renza Shephard was a longtime church soloist and an active member. Her son, Alan, attended the Sunday School until he left for the Naval Academy, and later became the first American in space and walked on the moon. At the services, members elected by the congregation read from the Bible and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* written by Mary Baker Eddy, a native of NH who discovered and founded Christian Science in 1866. The Reader participating in today's service is Randee Martin.

1888 St. Thomas Aquinas Parish was formed by the appointment of its first resident pastor. Father William J. O'Connor was so designated by the Most Reverend Denis M. Bradley and shortly after took up his duties here. The parish included Derry proper, Epping, Goffs Falls, as well as Salem, Windham, Chester and Sandown. Upon arrival in Derry, Father O'Connor at once organized for work and held regular weekly Mass in Smith Hall and later at the Opera House. By commendable efforts, he then began the construction of the large church which stands on Crystal Avenue.

On August 2, 1914, headlines in The Derry News: Catholic Church Burned and Beautiful Building on Crystal Avenue Destroyed. Sunday, November 11, 1917 will long be remembered by the members of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Parish for on that day their fine new large church edifice was formally dedicated to the worship of God. The weather was all that could have been desired and the large congregations were present at all the services of the day. Every seat in the large church was filled by 10:00 a.m. and everyone waited patiently for the services of the dedication to begin. At the close of Mass and benediction the solemn and very impressive service of saying the prayers for the dead was performed with the Bishop as leader. This was certainly an engaging service to all present. The large congregation was in perfect stillness as the Bishop recited the well-known prayers of the church. The rest of the pews were filled with interested persons; even extra chairs were brought in to accommodate the eager listeners. No doubt more than 1,000 persons were in attendance at this service. (Dunn, c. 1917). The current priests are Fr. Philip Pacheco, OFM and Fr. Joaquin Mejia, OFM.

1880 The First Baptist Church of Derry was founded in 1880. Baptist pastors from Hudson and Salem came to "Derry Depot" to see if there were enough people to start a church here. Founding families: Stowell, May, Wheeler, Morse, Evans and Pillsbury. This area had a mixed reputation then: "a village where the elements of sin...rum and gambling threaten to blight its prosperity...and indifference to religion characterizes its residents."

The corner lot at Broadway and Crystal was purchased for \$400 in 1881, and the sanctuary erected in 1883. The bell was a gift from First Parish Congregational Church. The Church had to close for a month during the flu epidemic of 1918, and again during the month of March 1950. Our current pastor is Rev. Malcolm Widness.

1885 Saint Luke's United Methodist Church history dates from May 1885, when Rev. William Ramsden of First Methodist Episcopal Church in Derry began holding services Sunday afternoon in the Old Fellows' Hall. These were well attended, there being a number of Methodist families in the vicinity at whose

homes week-night meetings were held. At the public service held Feb. 12, 1887, the letters of twenty-four persons were read and three were baptized and received. The new society was formally organized and named St. Luke's. On the following Tuesday evening, Feb. 14, the members met and elected a board of stewards and trustees. Having carried on the work in connection with the parent society for three years, Rev. Ramsden was appointed by the bishop as pastor of St. Luke's in April 1888. The edifice, parsonage, and the lots were purchased from Mrs. Boyd. Ground was broken for the church building in June 1888. The house of worship (original church edifice) was formally dedicated with appropriate services April 17, 1889. The Rev. Nory Leachon is the current pastor.

1854 The Londonderry Methodist Church was founded with the first service held by Mr. Nutter in the Londonderry Town Hall (now the Lion's Hall) during the spring. Mr. Nutter, from Kingston, was subsequently appointed to Londonderry by the Methodist Conference and worship services were started in small neighborhood meetings in different parts of town. After two years of fundraising and building, the church building was completed and dedicated on March 5, 1856. In 1884 eight new horse sheds were built at the rear of the church. In the 1870s and 1880s there was much cooperation with the Londonderry Presbyterian Church. The Methodist congregation contributed generously toward the purchase of a bell for the Presbyterian Church which was to be rung for the services of both churches. In 1891 the building was raised up to two feet, and a furnace and new slate roof were installed.

In 1931 electric lights were installed at the church and the parsonage, and water was piped to the sinks. In 1953 the Londonderry Methodist and Presbyterian churches joined in federation, which lasted until 1961. The Londonderry United Methodist Church spire was added in 1980. The Office, Sunday School and Fellowship Hall were added in 1988-89. In the summer of 2012, permanent walls and doors were added in the basement of the original building. (Based on "Historical Minutes" compiled by Helen Plummer in 1989.) Our current pastor is the Rev. Amy Alletzhauser.

1837 Central Congregational Church was founded in 1837 and is at its present location at 14 Crescent Street in Derry Village since then. Shortly before that time in 1829 a Young Ladies Seminary started nearby, as an offshoot of the Adams Female Academy in East Village. The church was organized on August 3, 1837 by 64 persons; 23 from the Londonderry Parish, 40 from the First Church in East Derry, and one person from Pelham. The church was built at 14 Crescent Street, formerly Church Street, and has been altered and remodeled several times over the past 182 years.

The Ladies Benevolent Society was a driving force of this church for many years. They had their own property at the corner of Main and Pinkerton streets for many years until 1970 when the present Fellowship Hall was built.

The church voted several times in the 1950s and 60s to remain an independent Congregational church, and is presently affiliated with the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference, the CCCC's. The current pastor since 2014 is the Rev. Dr. John Barner.

1742 The Windham Presbyterian Church was founded and called its first pastor the Reverend William Johnston in 1742. Services were held three times on Sunday - morning, afternoon, and evening; and there was a prayer service during the week. The first structure was built on Copp's Hill, now Cemetery Hill. In 1798, a new meeting house was built (the present Town Hall); and the original meeting house was transported to Salem to become a family dwelling. In 1835, the present structure was built and in 1846 a bell was installed in the belfry. Two historical markers honor the ministries of two pastors: the Rev. Samuel Harris (1774-1848) Pastor of Church and Town of Windham 1805-1826, and Rev. Calvin Cutler (1781-1844) Pastor of the Presbyterian Church and Society in Windham 1828-1844. Currently the church has 151 members and the pastor is the Rev. Dr. John H. Seiders.

1735 Londonderry Presbyterian Church traces common origins in the New World back to the Scots-Irish Presbyterians who emigrated from Aghadowey, County of Londonderry, in Ireland with their preacher, the Rev. James MacGregor, who settled here in 1719 in what was then called Nutfield. Due to the large geographical area served by the founding parish, the decision was made to split the parish into the East and West Parishes to help make it easier for members to attend services. James MacGregor's son David, who traveled from Ireland with his father, was called to be our pastor in 1735. Rev. David who continued to live beside his father's home in East Derry was one of the three ministers who founded the first Presbytery for New England in 1745, known then as the Londonderry Presbytery. The East Parish eventually changed denominations and became the First Parish Congregational Church in Derry, and the West Parish became what is now Londonderry Presbyterian Church. We are the oldest continuing Presbyterian Church north of Boston, and our current sanctuary is the most recent of numerous prior meeting houses in what is now Derry and Londonderry, and was built and dedicated in 1838. Our current pastor is the Rev. Karla Dias.

1719 First Parish Congregational Church, United Church of Christ is the oldest church in the immediate area. First Parish Church was founded by Scotch-Irish Presbyterians in the spring of 1719. Faith was and continues to be a priority. Worship was held one day after arrival, a church body was organized in one month and a building was built in 1722. A "more imposing structure" replaced the first in 1769 and although altered and expanded through time, the main building and sanctuary remain our center for worship. First Parish Church became an independent community church in the Congregational tradition about 1810 as new settlers came to the area. Through the years the church has always had a strong instinct for both survival and faithfulness. In 1973 and again in 1985, we made major commitments to educational and community ministry through the additions of Noyes Hall and Currier Hall. We joined the United Church of Christ in 1995. First Parish is an "Open and Affirming" church in a theologically progressive tradition. We take the Bible seriously not literally. No matter who you are or where you're from – you are welcome here! Our current Senior Pastor and Teacher is the Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof.

Dear Friend,

As we gather together today to celebrate with grateful hearts the Presence of God these past three centuries, let us also stand in awe of the One who continues to give us the soul food that we need to walk the journeys of our lives.

Following a God who does not disappoint, our forebears had their struggles and we have ours. They fought disease and hostile forces; we fight division and hostile prejudices. They ventured into the unknown; we seek to reclaim civility. For them survival meant coming together despite their differences. History may show that our survival also depends upon this endeavor.

Let us do more than survive. Let us spring forward with a new sense of unity celebrating our diverse backgrounds and our differing points of view. As we celebrate “days gone by”, let us also celebrate God’s gifts of vision and hope in the days ahead. Thank you for coming today. Let’s get together again soon.

May God bless you and keep you.

Pastor Deborah, on behalf of the membership of First Parish
Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

With Gratitude:

- *To God for 300 years of constant loving kindness*
- *To Derry Heritage Commission, Paul Lindemann and Nancy Heywood for leading the teams behind the scenes*
- *To our Deacons and former Deacons*
- *To Michelle, for your gifts which are many and for all your hard work*
- *To all of the returning First Parish clergy*
- *To all of the participants in today’s service*
- *To the Rev. Diana Augspurger for her assistance putting together today’s worship service*
- *To Liz Greenberg - words aren’t enough*